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BTN. NO. 713- 31.

UNITED STATES CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

BULLETIN

BULLETIN NO. 713-31

Washington, D.C. 20415
April 27, 1973

SUBJECT: Hiring and Developing Low-Skilled and Disadvantaged Persons in the Federal Service (Worker-Trainee Opportunities)

Heads of Agencies and Independent Establishments:

Action date: In accordance with National and Regional EEO Plan Submissions (see Btn. 713-25)

BACKGROUND

1. Since 1968, Federal agencies have effectively used the Worker-Trainee Examination to fill vacancies at the lowest levels of Federal employment with low-skilled and disadvantaged persons. These Worker-Trainees have proven to be productive employees to the agencies that hired them and many have demonstrated potential for higher level jobs. Beginning in 1970, Federal agencies used funds available from the Department of Labor's Public Service Careers Program to give developmental opportunities to their Worker-Trainees. Through participation in this program, agencies have greatly improved their ability to apply systematic employee development, including orientation, assessment of skills and needs, career counseling, training, and trained supervision to entry level employees.

2. In his memorandum of August 8, 1969 to the heads of Departments and Agencies on Equal Employment Opportunity, President Nixon emphasized the need for such programs and directed Federal agencies to give special attention to efforts to hire and train the low-skilled and disadvantaged:

"In addition to assuring equal employment opportunity to all persons, the Government, as a responsible employer, must do its part along with other employers to provide special employment and training programs to those who are economically or educationally disadvantaged. We must hold out a helping hand and imaginatively use the facilities of the Government to prepare such persons for useful and productive employment."

Furthermore, Public Law 92-261 requires agencies to provide training and education programs designed to give a maximum opportunity to employees to

INQUIRIES: Office of Federal Equal Employment Opportunity, Code 101, Extension 26256, or 63-26256

CODE: 713, Equal Employment Opportunity

DISTRIBUTION: FPM (advance edition limited)

BULLETIN EXPIRES: June 30, 1974

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advance in order to meet their full potential. To do this effectively at the lowest grade levels, Federal agencies must now expand developmental opportunities to include a larger number of employees by incorporating these policies and procedures within the regular framework of operational personnel management.

3. Building on the Public Service Careers Program (PSC) experience the Civil Service Commission has developed a plan to utilize the best elements in PSC in providing more systematic developmental opportunities for all Worker-Trainee employees. Under the plan persons selected from the Worker-Trainee Examination will be placed into one of two job categories: (1) regular job assignments which will receive basic, general career guidance services, and (2) developmental job assignments which involve more specific types of training and developmental experiences that lead to target positions at GS-2, WG-3, PS-4 or above. The Commission will authorize ceiling exemptions to agencies for persons placed in this latter group.

PURPOSE

4. This Bulletin sets requirements and provides technical guidance for submission of plans by agencies in hiring and developing low-skilled and disadvantaged persons. Specifically this Bulletin:

- Sets agency requirements for initial development of all new Worker-Trainees.
- Sets agency requirements for providing more systematic developmental opportunities to those Worker-Trainees who initially show the greatest potential to perform higher level work.
- Provides agencies with technical guidance needed to plan and submit entry development program plans under the EEO Act requirements.
- Informs agencies of the kinds of program assistance available from the Civil Service Commission regional and area offices.

AGENCY REQUIREMENTS

5. In their continuing efforts to hire and develop low-skilled and disadvantaged persons agencies will:

- Plan and budget for essential resources.
- Recruit from the Worker-Trainee register or utilize the Veterans Readjustment Appointment (VRA) authority.
- Select and place employees in either regular jobs or developmental jobs.

- Provide all Worker-Trainees with initial orientation, assessment of training needs, counseling and supportive services.
- Provide developmental job opportunities with specific target positions for employees with potential to work in higher level positions.
- Evaluate their efforts to hire and develop low-skilled and disadvantaged persons.
- Report achievements in reaching established goals.

PLANNING AND BUDGETING

6. Agency planning and budgeting will be integrated with their overall EEO Affirmative Action Plans and submitted to the Civil Service Commission (CSC) for review and approval following the format in Attachment A. Agencies should:

- Analyze past hiring trends at entry levels and identify from among the entry level jobs those that, because they are now linked to higher level positions or can with reasonable effort be linked to higher level positions (developmental jobs) offer the greatest upward mobility opportunities.
- Develop staffing plans for filling both the regular and developmental jobs.
- Identify funds, manpower and other resources for hiring and developing persons lacking skills and knowledges necessary to gain and hold jobs above the lowest level in the Federal career service. (Low-skilled and disadvantaged persons.)

RECRUITMENT

7. Agencies will recruit from the Civil Service Commission Worker-Trainee Examination register or use the VRA authority. The Commission, when necessary, will conduct a publicity program, including positive outreach activities where needed to reach all segments of the target population. Such efforts will be coordinated with and utilize the assistance of local community resources (The Concentrated Employment Program, State Employment Service, Community Action Agency, etc.) with emphasis on persons who have received training under other manpower programs (Neighborhood Youth Corps, Job Corps, Opportunities Industrialization Centers, MITA, etc.).

SELECTION AND PLACEMENT

8. Selection will be made from the Worker-Trainee register or from VRA eligibles. Appointments from Worker-Trainee lists will be career-conditional. Veterans Readjustment Appointments will be made in accordance with the provisions of the VRA program.

Placement in developmental jobs and regular jobs from the Worker-Trainee lists may be at the time of initial appointment or as an alternative, agencies may delay placement into the developmental jobs until the completion of the individual assessment which should be accomplished within 30 days of the appointment. If placements are delayed, they must be made within the agencies' existing merit promotion programs.

REGULAR JOB OPPORTUNITIES

9. Agencies will provide Worker-Trainee employees placed in regular jobs, assignments that utilize their abilities, allow them to develop self-confidence, relate work accomplishment to the mission of their organization and help them recognize the importance of good work performance. Regular job appointments will include:

- Orientation as a structured program designed to explain work duties, responsibilities and benefits; describe the environment of work; and define the agency's and the work unit's mission to new Worker-Trainees.
- A systematic appraisal of both work skills and knowledges, attitudes and basic educational skills and knowledges as they relate to the work career. This assessment will form the basis for determining the training needs of all appointments from the Worker-Trainee list irrespective of the type of entry job they are placed in. The employee's supervisor, with assistance from the personnel office, will generally make this assessment.
- Career counseling services will be provided for all Worker-Trainee employees on a regular basis. Counselors and employees will discuss work performance, developmental progress, career development opportunities and work related personnel problems in an effort to assist employees, supervisors and managers in meeting the requirements of this plan.
- Training experiences, on-the-job and/or formal, will be provided all regular Worker-Trainee employees according to their needs giving them the skills and knowledges needed to perform in their present job and potential jobs in the future.

DEVELOPMENTAL JOB OPPORTUNITIES

10. Ceiling relief will be granted only for those persons placed in developmental jobs. For this group, agencies will:

- Identify entry developmental jobs. The target positions will generally be jobs at or above the GS-2 level which have been identified as having the greatest upward mobility potential. These jobs will normally provide entry into occupations with higher career ladders.

- Develop individual career plans which include qualification requirements for target positions (in terms of skills and knowledges used) career ladders and operational plans to meet these requirements.
- Provide work experience with a mixture of the kinds of tasks associated with the present position and the kinds associated with the target position or higher position in the career ladder.
- Provide training especially designed to help the employee meet the specific qualification requirements of the target job and higher positions in the career ladder.

EVALUATION

11. Agencies will issue guidelines on planning, implementing, and evaluating progress. The evaluation should include specific requirements relating to the number of developmental jobs identified, trainee progress, and program administration.

CEILING EXEMPTIONS

12. Ceiling exemptions will be granted on the basis of career development opportunities given those trainees in developmental jobs. The ceiling relief will be applied as follows:

- Trainees hired through Worker-Trainee Examination or under VRA authority and placed in developmental jobs will not be charged to agency personnel ceilings for a twelve month period.
- The ceiling exemption will generally be retained by the individual Worker-Trainee throughout the first twelve months of Federal employment regardless of promotions.
- Should a Worker-Trainee resign or be released by his agency, his ceiling exemption will revert to the agency's allocation to be applied to another individual hired under this program.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

13. Agencies will furnish the Civil Service Commission with reports in accordance with Attachments A and B to this Bulletin. Modified instructions for filling out SF-163 are included. Reporting requirements for the

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Central Personnel Data File (CPDF) and requirements for reporting program participants and associated compensation on the SF-113 series will be issued in a later Bulletin.

CSC RESPONSIBILITIES

14. The Civil Service Commission is responsible for reviewing and approving agency plans to hire and develop disadvantaged persons, for monitoring and evaluating agency progress under these plans, for assisting agencies in planning and implementing their efforts, and for reporting to the President and the Congress on overall Federal progress in hiring and developing disadvantaged and low-skilled persons.

SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL

15. The Civil Service Commission will review and approve agency plans in accordance with the requirements of this Bulletin and in CSC Bulletin No. 713-25. Program participation and requests for ceiling relief will be made by agencies as part of their EEO Plan submissions using the format shown in Attachment A:

- National EEO plans should indicate the information on a cumulative basis for nationwide participation.
- Regional EEO plans should contain the specific data for the organizational segment of the agency covered by the regional EEO plan being submitted.

NOTE: Agencies which are scheduled to submit their FY-74 national EEO plans by May 1, 1973, may make a separate submission for their FY-74 participation in this program if they need additional time for planning and budget purposes. Such delays should not be extended beyond August 1, 1973. Thereafter, all FY submissions will follow the schedule for EEO Plan submissions.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

16. The Civil Service Commission will provide agencies with continuing assistance on hiring and developing Worker-Trainees under this plan through the CSC-EEO staff in Washington, D.C., EEO Representatives in Civil Service Commission Regional offices, and through CSC staff in area offices throughout the country.

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An Operations Manual will be issued for agency use in developing and implementing their plan to hire and develop low-skilled persons. The manual will include sections on orientation and assessment, career counseling, basic education, supervisory training and appraisals, evaluation and other developmental activities and support services.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

17. The Civil Service Commission will monitor agency activities under this plan to assure that the requirements set forth in this Bulletin are met. This will be accomplished through a review of agency reports and through periodic visits to agency installations. Monitoring activities will be combined with technical assistance to help participating agencies overcome any problems in program operation that may arise. In addition, agency programs are subject to review by the Commission through the regular personnel management evaluation process and through special reviews of equal employment opportunity. The Operations Manual referred to in paragraph 16 will include guidelines for agency self-evaluation.

REPORTS TO THE PRESIDENT AND THE CONGRESS

18. Semi-annually, the Commission will report on Government-wide progress within the context of its required report on EEO in the Federal service.


Bernard Rosen
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Attachment